

MAM'S HUNDRED TUNE ORGAN

By G. W. OGDEN

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in so six years—at least everybody 'cept Els' Ann." She heard Mam say from her perch on the steps. Then that's big boots clumped across the porch, the screen door creaked and he sat down in a chair a respectable distance from Els' Ann.

"What's 'er you got in that box, Els' Ann?" he asked.

"It ain't no box," she replied lamely; "it's a organette."

"Gee-mo-gee," said That. "Play on box or I know you'll never chin in her palm." He had swept the gravel path running like a lava scorched strip of barrenness to the front gate, through the sooty green of the uncut lawn. Her broom leaned on the steps beside her.

So the little yellow horse drawing the weather-banded buggy passed under her eyes as it made a great show of hurrying by the house and turned without a jolt, the road being so smooth, to the kitchen door. At the well the horse stopped and plumped its head into the trough of water.

A sparsely made woman climbed from the buggy and closed the door behind with a load of groceries beside the curb. There was a chinking sound, a preliminary note or two; then it began to play. "Nearer, My God, to These," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "Rock-a-Doodle," "Rock-a-Doodle," "Rock-a-Doodle," all in the same sprightly, sleepy tone, came from the organette as Els' Ann, bound in the charm of the unaccustomed dissipation, turned on.

By degrees That Brasfield moved closer, his eyes never leaving the organette; then he moved to Els' Ann's head, above the blue bush and looked at the window. Then his left arm was around Els' Ann's shoulders. After what seemed to be hours of this, he turned to the organette and said:

"This lake held the sacred crocodiles, and as each died in turn it was buried in one of the 1,500 underground shrines of the world famed "Labyrinth" at hand, side by side with the embalmed bodies of successive pharaohs—Philadelphia Lawyer."

Presently she receded, singing the hymn half-sobbingly, with the incessant coffee and green tea rising about her, placed her burden upon the step beside the silent woman and said:

"Well, Mam."

"Els' Ann, you home?" queried Mam, turning slowly.

"What're you thinkin' about Mam?" Els' Ann asked, untying the strings of her broad-brimmed hat and swinging it at her side.

Her mother was silent.

"You know it's a bad sign to you when you think, Mam," Els' Ann said anxiously. "You ain't goin' to git down with the malarial janders, air you?"

"Els' Ann," he whispered—"Els' Ann, will you have me?"

Els' Ann bowed her head. "You know I would before you axed me," she said gently and signed as one sight seen a great labor finished and put aside.

The screen door creaked, and Mam stood in the gleam of moonlight looking in through the window.

"You put that 'nile' on the back roller now, and she 'an' wind it up; that it plays 'em all over again. That's what the feller said."

"Well, Mam."

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"D—yon git any mail, Els' Ann?" Mam asked gravely.

Els' Ann put her hand on Mam's shoulder and looked into her face, wrinkled and brown as a tobacco leaf.

"No use of you trying to put me, Mam," she said. "You know what you thinkin' about Mam?"

Mam turned her back to her persistent questioner, raised her eyes to the dim rim of the horizon again and answered the quiver of remorse and regret in her voice.

"It's a organette this, Els' Ann."

"A organette?" gasped Els' Ann, with a spasm of intake of breath. Then she dropped down to the step. The shadow of the house fell down the path and drew the gate posts into its refreshing embrace.

After awhile Mam sat beside her. Neither spoke.

So it was an organette this time. The hand that had been induced by the visit of a postman to whom she gave \$7 for an enlarged picture of her dead husband. Seven dollars was a heap for a picture, but the life and one's own, we know. Dave Coker, the grocer at Monticello, gave her just like it with \$10 worth of goods.

At length Els' Ann arose. "Where is it at, Mam?" she asked.

"It's on the kitchen table," answered Mam with the guilty feeling of a penitent robber disclosing the hiding place of his spoils.

Els' Ann went in and sat down at the table beside the little varnished box. She followed and stood beside her. Els' Ann felt the shining surface with her calloused, iron-toughened hand, traced the gold trimming around the top and the gold lettering. "Organette," and asked:

"How much did you give the feller for it, Mam?"

Mam's face brightened. "Only 'leven dollars," she answered. "I know the feller said it plays, but he didn't say how much. I know your pa's gonna consta—"

"I know you can play on her with all her han's an' feet, ya jes' set down an' turn that little han'le an' the music goes—that's what the feller said."

"We paid him 'leven dollars outen the twelve Tivedle gave me for old Snow's calf."

"Yes, Els' Ann, but he said it was worth ten times the money. He said you'd have to pay \$5 to git the organette, and then you'd have to pay another \$5 of them tunes played, an' here you can sit right in your own parlor an' have 'em at any time, day or night, without extra cost whatsoever."

Els' Ann sat motionless, with her hands clasped, waiting to roost, and Mam again took up her penitent vigil on the front steps.

The gloom deepened in the room where Els' Ann remained alone. She was overwhelmed, by the idea of the money she had spent on the \$12 Mam had so foolishly spent for the worthless box with a roll of perforated paper inside. She should have carried the money with her when she went to Monticello instead of telling Mam to wait out a tramp didn't sneak in and get it. "Seemed like them there agents always waited till she went away to flock in on Mam. Must all know about her. Oho to be sure she has a right to be here, but when she gets money for that new winter jacket now? Butter eggs don't fetch any more than would buy groceries an' shoes, with a dress for Mam now an' a dress for me. Well, I'll have to wait for a year or two. Let's see how long was it? Well, ever since the winter That Brasfield began to keep company with me, I've been a widow for two years now. I've got a regular as prayer master, see? George Guillot's word about guitar music. Come good with two other fellows away. Everybody says I'm in my trunk."—London Globe.

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Artificial Flowers.

It was in Italy that a demand for artificial flowers first arose. This was due primarily to a caprice of fashion which demanded that the festive blossoms should be worn and the taste of the season should move in and out with each breath. There should be perfect freedom to do as they please.

Enjoying Himself.

A fond mother sent her small boy into the country, and after a week of anxiety received the following letter:

"I got here all right, and I forgot to write you. It's a great pleasure to have a boat to have fun in. A fellow and I went out in a boat, the boat tipped over and a man got me out, and I was so full of water that I didn't know nothing for a long time. When other boy has to be buried when they find him. His brother came from his home and she died all the time. A horse kicked me over, and I cannot fall."

Believe in Yourself, Believe in Humanity.

Believe in yourself, believe in humanity, believe in the success of your undertakings. Fear nothing and no one. Love your work. Work, work, trust. Keep in touch with today. Teach yourself to be practical and up to date and sensible. You cannot fail.

All She Wanted.

"Do you think, young man, that you can give my daughter all she wants?"

"We're goin' to set an old barn on fire tonight, and I am not your son if I don't have some real fun. I lost my watch, and I am very sorry. I shall have to get another, and when I do, I can get a new one for my son."

"I am sure must be both stupid and uncharitable who believes there is no virtue or truth but on his own side."

Adonis.

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Agents for Auto.

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